

TOWN OF ANDOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS WATER TREATMENT PLANT 397 LOWELL STREET 01810-4416

AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE ANDOVER WATER DEPARTMENT TO PARENTS, TEACHERS AND RESIDENTS OF ANDOVER REGARDING LEAD CONCENTRATIONS IN SCHOOL DRINKING WATER

Recently, the issue of lead in drinking water in schools has emerged through various media outlets. As your public water supplier, we would like everyone with concerns to have access to reliable and accurate information regarding this issue.

Typically, lead gets into drinking water supplies after water leaves the treatment plant; the most common source of lead in potable water is from fixtures or fittings that have some lead in them, solder or pipes in the plumbing of a building. Any time water sits unused in plumbing, lead that is present can leach into the water. The only way to know it is there is to test samples of drinking water.

In 2004, the Town took action in response to the 'Lead in School Drinking Water' notice issued by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. The Andover Department of Public Works collaborated with the Heath Department and Plant & Facilities to sample each school in Town to ensure the safety of the drinking water in each of our public schools. This effort was in addition to the select Andover public schools that have been routinely sampled as a part of standard lead and copper monitoring.

Guided by DEP, sampling was carried out in several locations at each Andover school, including bubblers and cafeteria kettles. Based on findings, a maintenance list was generated to document any elevated lead levels as well as the remediation of the issue. All findings and remediation efforts were reported to DEP; the Town continues to be in full compliance with all lead regulations.

As a result of the collaborative efforts to ensure safety and reliability of drinking water supplies, the Water Department was awarded DEP's Systems Taking Action to Reduce Lead Award (STAR-L award) in 2006.

Andover schools continue to be tested on a triennial basis for concentrations of lead and copper; all findings are reported to DEP and any issues found are remedied immediately. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this issue, please feel free to contact Ali Armstrong, Environmental Analyst at the Water Treatment Plant, at 978.623.8350 x.531.